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An Unparalleled Opportunity.

One of the most urgent questions now before the nation is whether the immediate effect of the European war is to be to greatly increase the armaments of the United States. Whatever the outcome may be at the present time of the army and navy contest in Congress, the conflict is certain to go on for years, and all the friends of peace in every quarter of the nation must be on the alert and not allow themselves to be deceived by specious pretexts. Militarism has wrecked Europe, and will wreck our America just as surely, in spite of splendid international arbitration treaties and courts, if it is not driven to the wall and given its death blow. What is the outlook?

On January 16 the Naval Committee reported to the House of Representatives the Naval Appropriation bill, which carried, all told, the sum of \$145,500,000. Enormous as this sum is, the report was

considered, under the circumstances, to be quite conservative. It carried only \$3,000,000 more than the naval budget of the previous year. But several members of Congress and numerous citizens have been urging, and are still urging, much larger appropriations for national defense, whatever that may mean. Instead of two huge battleships, recommended by the committee, certain members of both Houses are clamoring for *three*, or even *four*, new dreadnaughts. The Army Appropriation bill, which has just been passed on January 22, appropriating \$101,000,000 (last year it was \$94,000,000 plus), was treated in the same way, the militarist Representatives fighting to the last for additional appropriations, though they met with no encouragement from either Democratic or Republican leaders.

It is at least encouraging to know that the Naval Committee has rejected all the proposals, appeals, threats, and direful prophesies put forth in favor of further increasing the appropriations for the navy, and has limited itself to practically the budget of last year. There is reason to believe that the committee's appropriations will not be added to on the floor of the House, though a number of Representatives are proposing to make a big fight for larger sums. On the other hand, many members will speak and vote against the committee's report, as entirely extravagant, and there is a possible chance that the two battleships may be reduced to one. Certainly this ought to be the result. There are no enemies in sight from any quarter of the horizon. Two years ago the appropriation, voted for by both the House and Senate with considerable majorities, provided for only one new dreadnaught, and there is not a particle of reason in favor of any increase of that number now. The vote for two ships last year seems to have been dictated purely by political considerations—anything to beat the other party, as it was election year.

Our brave militarists of the ultra patriotic type are hard to understand. Are they determined to have war at any rate, reason or no reason? There may have been some ground for fear of war in past years, but none whatever at the present time. The European nations are involved in a war so extensive, so deadly and ruinous, as would make it impossible now for any one of them to have a conflict with the United States with its hundred millions of people. They are destroying their armies and navies as fast as possible. The great armies of Germany, Russia, France, Austria, England and the rest are being beaten to pieces with incredible swiftness. The mere thought of how many millions of men have been slaughtered during the six months of the fighting makes one stand paralyzed at the recital. In less

than six months, as the Navy Year Book recounts, Germany has lost forty-seven ships of all classes, England thirty-one, Russia four, France five, Austria five, Japan five, Turkey two. If the conflict goes on another six months or more it looks as if these great armaments, which have been considered invincible, will be practically destroyed. With the immense armaments destroyed and the colossal debts saddled upon the crushed people no war could possibly be undertaken by any one of these powers against America within the lifetime of the present generation. Even our loudest-mouthed militarists might well bow their heads and grow silent before this horrible spectacle. America has at the present moment the supreme opportunity to check immediately the growth of armaments in the western world and to stand ready when the moment shall come, as it will come soon, to make it impossible for humanity ever again to become involved in such a colossal and inhuman crime as is now being witnessed.

The Major Premise.

The appalling conditions in Europe bring a great opportunity, and with that opportunity a subtle danger, to those of us who are proud to be known, in the half-patronizing, half-approving term of the day, as the Peace People. The opportunity lies in the fact that—barring a few professional soldiers and others lacking even that excuse—the whole world stands aghast at the realization of what war actually means. Never before in history did men loathe war as they are loathing it today. The harvest truly is ready.

The danger is that we may lose our unique opportunity through the scattering of our energies, through getting confused and ensnared in the multitude of considerations and possibilities which the war brings to the minds of thinking men and women. Our task is to keep one single issue burning into the general human consciousness: That the world can and must find some other way to settle differences of opinion than by the slaughter of men and the starvation of women and children. This issue is clear-cut enough and big enough, God knows, to demand the undivided energies of every one of us. The late Professor Cramb to the contrary, there is nothing in it that transcends human reason. Our road is clearly marked, but it is far from an easy thing to stick to it. The by-paths are many and lead alluringly from the main road—and they lead to things worth while in themselves. We can perhaps resist the temptation to which some newspapers are already succumbing—to treat the war as a gigantic sporting event, a sort of cosmic football game. We may turn away from the enjoyment of the grim humor of a situation where nine nations are all fighting a *defensive* war. It is harder to put aside the study of the technical factors in warfare, artillery, and aircraft, dreadnaught and submarine, contraband and blockade. The economic effects of war are for the best

of reasons demanding our attention, even in this neutral country. We have a human interest in searching for the immediate causes of the conflict, and a human wish for the triumph of whichever we may believe to be the better cause. We are tempted to speculate upon the probable result, to forecast the changes upon the map of Europe, and the terms of peace. And there is the final temptation to expound the lessons for our own land, whether, for example, the war has pointed to a big navy for us, or a little navy, or a middle-sized navy.

All these things are of vital human interest, but for the moment they are not for us. It is not for us to suggest compromises or even solutions. Our task is to keep hammering away at the major premise. These things have all to do with minor premises or true or false conclusions. The major premise is that after this there must be no more wars. *Delendum est bellum*. The world has been aroused, but it will be no slight task to keep it from falling back into lethargy. We must remember that people can get used literally to anything. We are today so benumbed by the daily stories of death that the frightful destruction of life in the Italian earthquakes leaves us almost untouched. Our senses are drugged with horror.

To reiterate, our opportunity and our task is to keep the emphasis in the right place, upon the sanctity of human life and of the individual human career. When enough men and women are saying that war must go, and are making this the major premise in their reasoning, and not before, war will go, and the question of deciding *how* it will go may then be left to the experts upon international relations—the lawyers and financiers, the diplomatists and legislators.—K.

The Peace Women's First Demand.

The late Justice Brewer was one of the noblest and most constant workers for the peace cause whom our country has known in recent years; and the peculiar services rendered by some of his later utterances stand out distinct in the grateful memory of all who were associated with him in our movement. No one has in this time warned the country more impressively of the serious menace to the interests of peace and the welfare of the country resulting from the gradual massing of such immense numbers of military and naval officers, active and retired, at the National Capital, with their pervasive social influence and their constant and influential intercourse with the members of Congress and of the Administration. He emphasized as hardly any other the sufficiency of non-intercourse for the enforcement of international decisions, when the inter-nation is once organized, should any enforcement ever be required. He undoubtedly believed with Senator Root that the adequate ultimate sanction of international decrees would prove